

HEALING POWERS OF ALPINIA GALANGA

In the Netherlands, people know this spice as laos, and fresh laos is available at the green-grocer. Other names are laos root, Thai ginger, and galanga. The powder of the root and the fresh root are used in the Indian kitchen, and in the kitchens of the rest of South East Asia. The root of this tropical herb is very tasty. The plant is close family of the ginger. In Indonesia the plant is for sale all vegetable markets and is called "lingkuas" or "lengkuas". In India the plant is called Kulanjan, Sugandha Vacha, Rasna and Greater galanga.

Traditional medicine *Alpinia galanga*

Galanga is widely used in traditional medicine. There are several scientists who have listed the traditional medical applications of *alpinia galanga*. It has the following traditional medicinal properties: antifungal, antitumor, deworming, anti-diuretic, against ulcers, against heart disease, against rheumatic pains, against chest pains, in dyspepsia, fever-inhibiting, diabetes-relieving, liver-supporting and has a kidney-supporting effect. It thus works in a series of diseases. A researcher from Iraq can add the following diseases: eczema, bronchitis, rhinitis, measles, pityriasis versicolor (yeast infection), inflammation of the entrance ear canal, gastritis, gastric ulcer and cholera.

Much scientific research *Alpinia galanga*

Alpinia galanga has been researched intensively. There are several pharmacological reviews. In such a survey it is listed which other studies have been done. These studies are bundled in order to obtain an overall picture of the medicinal effects of *Alpinia galanga*. In a pharmaceutical journal, the *Pharmacia Sinica* from 2001, there is such an overview of all scientifically proven medicinal effects of the galanga root. In the years that followed, new reviews were published that provide an update of the pharmaceutical effects of laos root. Important medicinal substances that researchers have encountered in galanga are gallic acid glycoside, galango isoflavonoid, betasitosterol, galangine, alpinine, zerumbone and campferide. In addition to research into the *Alpinia galanga*, studies have been conducted on all plants from this family. In 2012, researchers Ghosh and Ragan named the *Alpinia* family the gold mine of future medical practice. In the world of plant medicines it often happens that plants from the same families have corresponding medicinal qualities.

Antibacterial activity

An etheric oil of the galanga root works against the following bacteria: *Escherichia coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella typhimurium* A, *Salmonella enteritidis* and *Pasteurella multocida*. The Indian researchers included 11 studies in their meta-study, all of which describe the antibacterial activity of laos or *Alpinia galanga*. In addition, substances from galanga also work against a large number of fungi such as the *candida albicans*. These are important indications of the medicinal efficacy of laos because many diseases are accompanied by overgrowth of colonies of bacteria and fungi.

Anti-inflammatory activity of *Alpinia galanga*

Five studies have been published on the anti-inflammatory effect of galanga root. It turns out that this plant effectively fights inflammation. Researchers see relationships between inflammations at the cell level and other diseases such as diabetes and asthma. It appears, therefore, that laos root helps to fight these diseases because the underlying causes, inflammatory processes, are countered by *Alpinia galanga*.



Laos root protects the liver

An investigation has been done into the liver protective effect of galanga root. In this type of research the liver is damaged by applying a scientific standard method: the test animal is given paracetamol in order to damage the liver heavily. Then they give a separate group of the test animals galanga root extract and investigate the parameters of the liver. It then appears that test animals that have eaten galanga root have a less damaged liver than test animals that did not. Laos root thus protects against liver damage by paracetamol, but not only against this medicine. Paracetamol is used as a standard research tool because the extent to which the liver is damaged by paracetamol, is *measurable*. The damage can be quantified in numbers, so when the numbers change, it shows the effectiveness of a medicinal property. The idea behind this statistical method is that we now know that it supports liver function. Galanga protects against all types of liver damage, also for example damage by sugar and soft drinks.

Anti-HIV

One study sees that the HIV virus is more difficult to replicate if it comes into contact with substances from laos root. It is seen as an HIV inhibitor. There are no plant medicines on the market that have been scientifically proven to make HIV virus disappear, but scientists keep looking for exactly that.

Laos stimulates immune system

Substances in galanga root stimulate the functioning of the immune system. A water-based extract was used in the study.

Laos against diabetes

The root of greater galanga has antidiabetic properties. Eating the root helps to regulate blood sugar levels. Several studies have been published on the antidiabetic effect. In 2009, a study was published that attributed the antidiabetic effect to the high number of antioxidants that galanga root contains. In the scientific world, it has been clear since the beginning of the third millennium, that diabetes is caused by inflammation at the cellular level, as are depression, cardiovascular disease, obesity and cancer. The fight against inflammatory activity in the body of a sick patient is therefore increasingly coming into the focus point of researchers who are looking for medical treatments that exceed the existing treatments in quality.

Antioxidant action *Alpinia galanga*

Greater galanga has a good antioxidant effect. That has been researched several times. These effects are the cause of the medicinal properties of laos root. For example, researchers see that all kinds of antioxidants can fight fungi.

Anti-ulcer

Greater galanga is good for the stomach. It involves a number of stomach disorders including peptic ulcer. In the traditional medicine of Arabia, this herb is used to combat dyspepsia, seasickness and intestinal colic. *Alpinia galanga* reduces gastric acid and appears to be a boost for the stomach and intestinal wall. This indicates that the traditional applications are justified by scientific research.



Recipe

Laos is used in various dishes. It can be in sateh sauce or peanut sauce. That is an Indonesian recipe. Another Indonesian recipe is sayur tumis and sayur lodeh. These are two basic recipes from the Indonesian kitchen with many variations. Here is a recipe for spinach soup. This is eaten together with rice as a complete meal. Tumis means stir-frying.

Recipe sayur tumis bayam

- 2 large onions
- 2 cloves of garlic
- Teaspoon of laos, root of alpinia galanga
- 1 hot red pepper
- 750 grams of bayam, spinach or wild spinach
- 3 dl water
- Bouillon cube or stock cube
- Tablespoon soy sauce



Trassi is traditionally used. That is a paste made of shrimp and therefore much less healthy. Shrimps contain many bio-amines or non-nutrients with inflammatory properties. If you want to make this meal for medical reasons, trassi should not go through it. You could also argue that the vegetables such as onions and spinach do compensate the adverse effects of trassi. In fact, it is true that herbs, spices, vegetables and fruit do have anti-inflammation properties, which in general eliminate the inflammation-promoting activities of food choices such as meat, fish, shrimps, prawns, shell animals, and other animal products. In the end, it is up to you what you eat.

The method of preparation is as follows: cut all vegetables into small pieces and fry them with coconut oil, soy sauce and 3dl water. You add the water slowly, stirring. You use that so that the vegetables do not burn. After 3-5 minutes of stirring, it is ready to eat.

Enjoy Your Medicine!



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